

Universal Mental Health Screening: Why it is Needed and How to get Started

Kevin Kusy, LCPC, NCC, PEL-SC
Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy

About Me

- Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor
- Nationally Certified Counselor
- Professional School Counselor
- Doctoral Student
- Educator
- Supervisor

Topics for Today

- Trends in Youth Mental Health
- What is a Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP)?
- What is the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)?
- What is Universal Mental Health Screening (UMHS)?
- Why is Universal Mental Health Screening (UMHS) important?
- If interested, what can I do to implement screening at my school?
- Benefits and Challenges of Universal Mental Health Screening (UMHS)

Current Trends in Youth

- About 50% of lifetime mental health conditions begin by age 14 (NAMI; WHO)
 - The average delay between first appearance and intervention is 11 years
- Up to 20% of all children and adolescents experience mental disorders (WHO)
- ADHD, behavioral problems, anxiety, and depression most commonly diagnosed disorders (ages 2-17) (CDC)
 - 9.4% ADHD
 - 7.4% behavioral
 - 7.1% anxiety
 - 3.2% depression

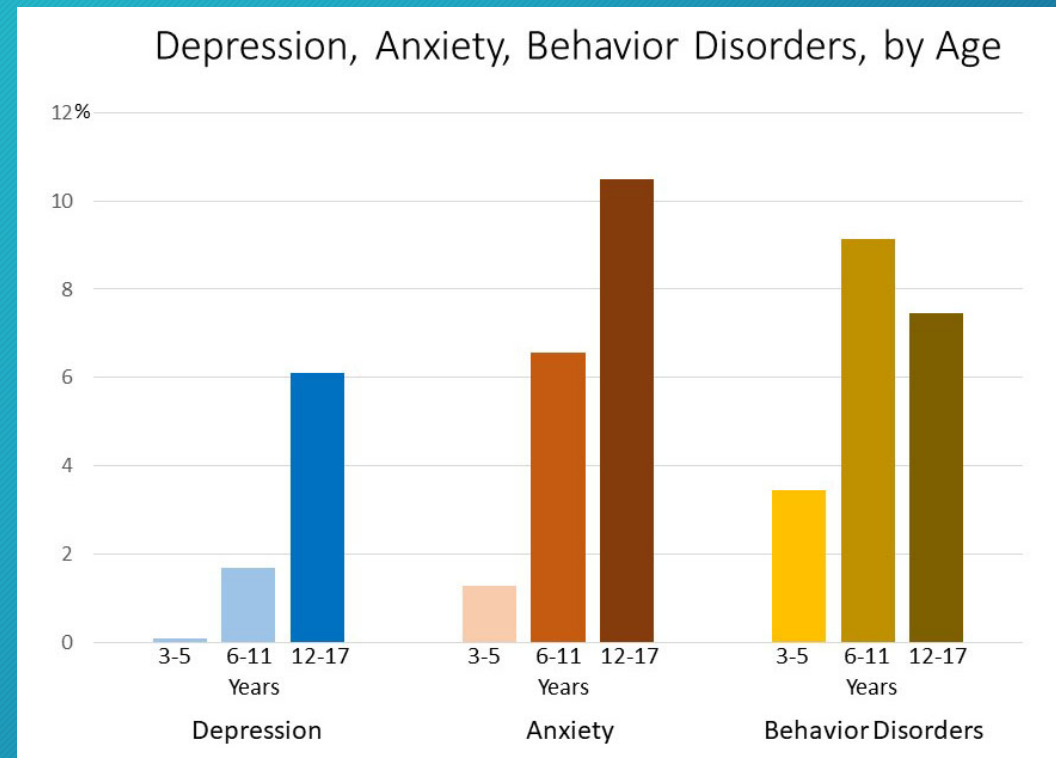
Current Trends in Youth

Trends of Depression, Anxiety, and Behavioral Disorders by age (CDC, Chart on right).

Concurrent diagnosis is common with depression (CDC)

About 74% have anxiety

About 47% have behavioral issues



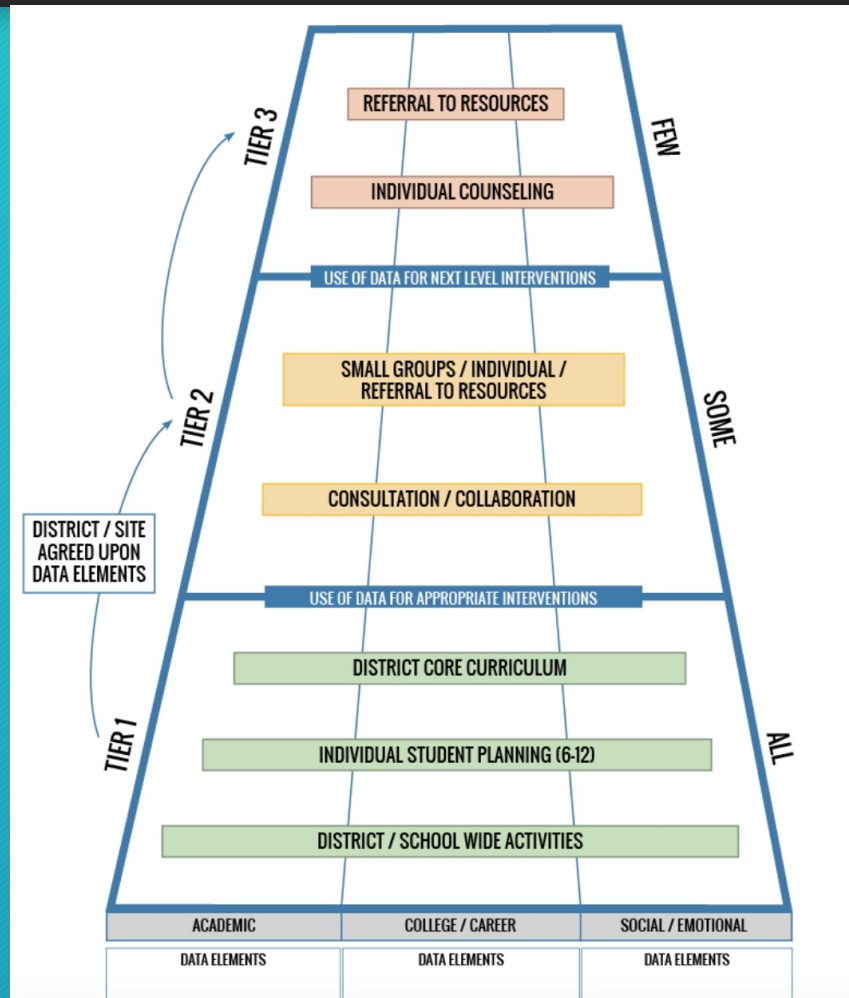
Comprehensive School Counseling Programs (CSCPs)

- Developmental Counseling Model
 - Uses best practices for school counseling
- American School Counseling Association (ASCA)
 - Illinois has adapted the “Illinois Model”
 - https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UAfvgFsBGF_JUSWCKaOiHq4SQTSSsYv4QcmCYCcMT74w/edit
 - ASCA updated in 2019 to 4th edition (see handout)

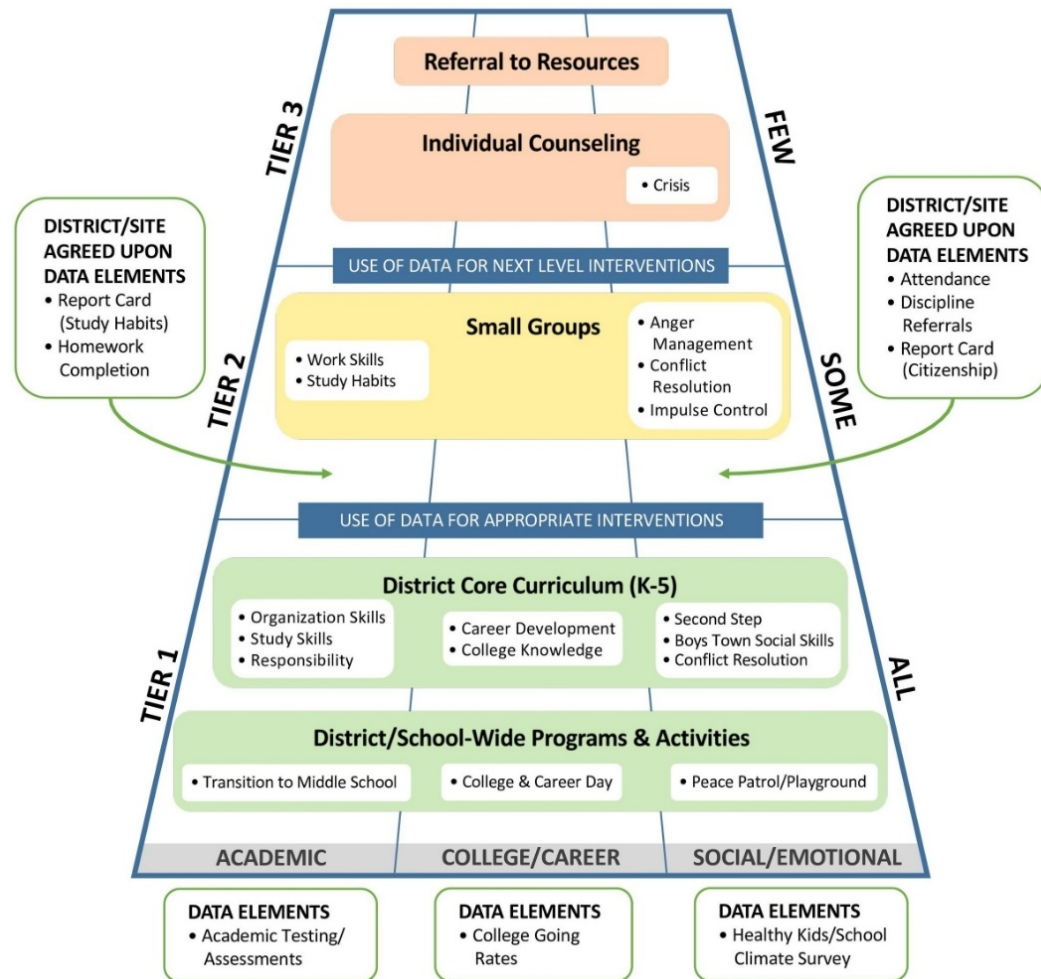
What is Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)?

- Umbrella term
 - Response to Intervention (RtI)
 - Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)
- Prevention Framework
- Using evidence based practice
 - Help achieve positive outcomes
 - Behavioral
 - Academic
 - Wellness

What is Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)?



What is Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)?



Activity

- Please spent 5 minutes outlining the MTSS procedure at your school
- Once everyone completes, pair up and discuss your intervention structure with your partner

What is Universal Mental Health Screening (UMHS)?

- A systematic assessment
- Given to ALL students
 - Class
 - Grade
 - Building
 - District
- Looks at social and emotional indicators
- Based off of the determined needs of students

What is Universal Mental Health Screening (UMHS)?

- Examines patterns of behaviors in school setting
 - Emotional
 - Behaviors
 - Social functioning
- Helps to identify individual needs
 - Emotional
 - Social
 - School performance

Why is Universal Mental Health Screening (UMHS) Important?

- Students are screened for other issues
 - Vision
 - Hearing
 - Testing for academic needs
- Long term implications
- Social or emotional issues not easily noticed

Why is Universal Mental Health Screening (UMHS) Important?

- Helps to differentiate student needs
 - Do some students have an elevated risk of...?
- A tool to help make sure mental health needs are not overlooked
 - Uses data over referrals
 - Points out some warning signs or trends

Activity

- Spend 5 minutes answering the following questions and talking to others:
 - What are the most prevalent presenting problems for students at your school?
 - What data are you using to determine these problems?

Let's Take a Screening Tool!

- Please spend the next 5 to 10 minutes filling out the answer to questions on the SDQ
- Once everyone is complete, we will score together

A Bit About the Screening Tool

- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)
 - Free assessment
 - 25 items around psychological attributes
 - Some positive and some negative
 - 5 scales
 - Emotional symptoms
 - Conduct problems
 - Hyperactivity/inattention
 - Peer relationship problems
 - Prosocial behavior
 - Modified version for parents or nursery teachers

A Bit About the Screening Tool

- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)
 - Two-sided version is available
 - Has an impact supplement on second page
 - Extended version of SDQ asks respondents if they see an issue
 - Looks at:
 - Chronicity
 - Distress
 - Social impairment
 - Burden to others

A Bit About the Screening Tool

- Please get into small groups of 2 or 3 to discuss:
 - Your score on the screening tool
 - Your thoughts on the screening tool
 - How is this tool beneficial, if you think it is?
 - How is this tool not beneficial, if you think it is not?
- Is the SDQ an assessment that would work with your student population?
- Will the SDQ allow for the information most needed about your student population?

How to Implement

- Create a team; secure buy-in
- Look at the purpose; define goals
- Look at resources and process
- Look at screening tools
- Data collection; analyzation; continued work

Create a Team

- Multidisciplinary team
 - School counselors
 - School social workers
 - School psychologists
 - Teachers
 - General and special education
 - Administrators
 - Community mental health providers
 - Families

Create a Team

- Gain buy-in from stakeholders
 - Conduct needs assessment
 - Team reviews data
 - What does the data suggest around student need?
 - Increased student absences
 - Decreased graduation rate
 - Increasing mental health needs (visits, intensity)
 - Clarify goals and purpose

What is the Purpose?

- What is the desire around screening and prevention/intervention?
 - Increase coping skills
 - Address anxiety issues
- Is this school wide? District? Transitions across K-12?
- How do you plan to

Resources and Process

- Planning and outlining the timeline
- Researching and answering questions around:
 - What are we screening for?
 - Which students? Often?
 - Our resources—financial, time
 - Liability? Documentation?
- Two components:
 - Time
 - Legal Issues

Select Screening Tool

- Who is going to complete screening tool?
- How in-depth of a process?
 - Self-report
 - Teachers/parents report
 - Multiple reports during year
- Cost/financials
- Validity/reliability
- Is screening tool appropriate for age?
- What is your consent process after selection?

What Screening Tools Exist?

- Systematic Screener for Behavioral Disorders (SSBD)
 - Ages 3-12
- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)
 - Ages 4-17
- Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS) Rating Scales
 - Ages 3-18
- Behavior Assessment System for Children 3: Behavior and Emotion Screening Tool (BASC-3 BESS)
 - Ages 3-18
- Beck Youth Inventories (BYI-2)
 - Ages 7-18

What Screening Tools Exist?

- Revised Children's and Adolescent Depression Scale (RCADS)
 - Ages 8-18
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD-7)
 - Ages 4-17
- Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS) Rating Scales
 - Ages 11-17
- Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ 9)
 - Ages 11-17
- Behavior Intervention and Monitoring Assessment System (BIMAS)
 - Ages 5-18

Activity

- Spend 5 to 10 minutes looking up a few screening tools, based on name only. Feel free to work with others, if there are tools that are of interest.
 - Which screening tool could potentially address the needs of your students?
 - How would you administer this assessment?

Data Collection and Implementation

- Once the timeline is set, how will team administer?
 - Multiple screenings per year is ideal
 - Educating school staff
 - Trainings for administration
 - How does the scoring and interpretation work?
 - How will results be shared to parents and students?

Services and Interventions

- Once the scoring and interpretation is complete:
 - What strategies will best serve our students?
 - Look at Tier 1, 2, and 3 needs
 - How do we eliminate disconnect between needs and services?
 - How will you handle counseling referrals for 1:1 needs?

Continued Assessment

- After completion of screening administration and scoring, students will receive services
 - Team continues to meet to debrief on process
 - What are the future steps?
 - Challenges in process?
 - How did data guide interventions?
 - Was this process more beneficial than previous practices?
 - Changes to make for future cycles
- Monitor progress of interventions and programs
 - Was intervention effective?
 - Long term changes?
- Evaluate data

Reflection

- What are some of the challenges you anticipate around implementing this process at your school?
- How would you present this to your school for buy-in?
- How would you phrase the benefits and challenges to an administrator?

Benefits to UMHS

- ALL students receive mental health screening
- Less students should need intervention over time
- Districts/schools save money over time
- Increase in awareness of community around student needs
 - Staff, parents, stakeholders
- Focus of staff is on student needs
 - Collaboration of staff
 - Increases morale

Challenges Around UMHS

- Limited time for staff to implement
- Limited funding
- Lack of support from community once screening tools identify needs
- Community support
 - Parents consent
 - Stigma concerns
 - Potential misidentification of students
- Cultural bias

Special Considerations

- Trauma issues
- Suicide
- Legal
- Ethical

Final Thoughts/Discussion

- Any additional thoughts or questions for the group?
- Do you want to stay in contact with each other?
 - If so, best way to contact?
 - Email chain
 - Google Doc group
 - Private Facebook page

Resources

- The School Counselor's Guide to Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
 - Goodman-Scott, Betters-Bubon, and Donohue (2019)
- SAMHSA “Ready, Set, Go”
 - https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/ready_set_go_review_mh_screening_in_schools_508.pdf
- SAMHSA “Universal Screening to Inform Intervention”
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UmXw0AmsvQM>
- The School